

## Patient Information Sheet

# Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)

NSAIDs are often used to reduce pain and inflammation in patients who have mild systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE). Many different types of NSAIDs exist, some of which you can buy without a doctor's prescription. These are called "over-the-counter" drugs. Examples of over-the-counter NSAIDs include aspirin, Motrin,<sup>1</sup> Orudis, and Anaprox. Tylenol is not an NSAID and is not used to reduce the inflammation of lupus.

Although all NSAIDs appear to work in the same way, there are differences among them. Not every NSAID has the same effect on every person. Also, you may find that one NSAID works well for a while, then for some unknown reason, it doesn't work well any more. Your doctor will probably switch you to a different NSAID to get the same helpful effects you had with the first one.

## INSTRUCTIONS

The brand name of your NSAID is: \_\_\_\_\_

The strength or dose of the NSAID ordered for you is: \_\_\_\_\_

Take the NSAID \_\_\_\_\_ time(s) per day.

The best time(s) to take your NSAID: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> Brand names included here and in this book are provided as examples only, and their inclusion does not mean that these products are endorsed by the National Institutes of Health or any other Government agency. Also, if a particular brand name is not mentioned, this does not mean or imply that the product is unsatisfactory.

## POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

These include upset stomach, headache, ringing in the ears, dizziness, rash, itching, easy bruising, fluid retention, blood in the stool, and \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## PRECAUTIONS

You may use NSAIDs cautiously during pregnancy, but do not take them during the first 3 months of your pregnancy or just before delivery. NSAIDs appear in breast milk and should be used cautiously if you are breastfeeding.

Some patients taking NSAIDs become more sensitive to sunlight. Use sunblock and protective clothing; avoid exposure to sunlight.

Do not take more than the recommended dose.

Do not take NSAIDs with other drugs, including over-the-counter medications, without first checking with your nurse or doctor. Over-the-counter medications are medications that you can buy without a doctor's prescription.

Tell any nurse, doctor, or dentist who is taking care of you that you are taking NSAIDs for your lupus.

Since NSAIDs can cause stomach and intestinal upset and irritation, take them with food or after meals. You should also avoid alcoholic beverages, because alcohol can aggravate these stomach and intestinal problems. Check with your doctor for guidance on these issues.